

Press Release

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**For Immediate Release**

**National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day**

February 7, 2005 is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day. The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health AIDS Program is proud to commemorate this day along with hundreds of national regional and local HIV/AIDS groups. The day was created to educate African Americans about HIV/AIDS and its devastating effects on communities. It is part of a national effort to encourage African Americans across the United States to seek more information, get tested, and get involved as this disease continues to devastate the African American community.

African Americans suffer from a majority of deaths caused by AIDS, accounting for more than half of all United States AIDS-related deaths in 2003. At the end of 2003, nearly 406,000 people were living with HIV/AIDS in the United States, and African Americans accounted for 42% of these AIDS cases. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among African American men ages 25 to 44 in the United States. Among African American women in the same age group, AIDS claims more lives than diabetes or cancer. In San Bernardino County, HIV infection rates among African Americans increased by 114% between 1999 and 2002.

On Monday, February 7, 2005, Brothers and Sisters in Action (BASIA) will be conducting a workshop in honor of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day. The theme for the workshop will be, "Toward a Better Understanding of HIV/AIDS in the Black/African American Community". This workshop will feature various keynote speakers who will discuss the impact of HIV/AIDS in the African American community. The Department of Public Health AIDS Program will support BASIA by providing educational information and resources on HIV/AIDS.

This event will be held from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm in Room 13 of the "New Hope Family Life Center" (Dorothy Ingram Library), located at 1505 West Highland Avenue in San Bernardino. Lunch will be provided, but seating space is limited. Please join us as we honor National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day and lend your support in fighting this disease within our community.

For more information, please contact BASIA staff Linda Hart at (909) 910-6311 or Patricia Green (909) 820-0446; or contact Andy Ndlela at (909) 388-5729.